

Message Text

PAGE 01 NATO 05386 082313Z

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ACTION EUR-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 PM-07 INR-10 L-03 NEA-10

NSAE-00 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SPC-03 USIA-15 TRSE-00

SAJ-01 AF-10 IO-14 OMB-01 EB-11 AID-20 SS-20 NSC-10

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FM USMISSION NATO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2573

SECDEF WASHDC

INFO ALL NATO CAPITALS 3428

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY VALLETTA

USMISSION EC BRUSSELS

USDOCOSOUTH

USNMR SHAPE

C O N F I D E N T I A L USNATO 5386

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, UK, MT, NATO

SUBJECT: UK-MALTESE RELATIONS

REF: LONDON 12796

1. AT NOVEMBER 8 NAC, UK PERMREP (PECK) REFERRED TO AN EXCHANGE OF CORRESPONDENCE BETWEEN SIR DOUGLAS-HOME AND DOM MINTOFF AND PROVIDED SOME ADDITIONAL DETAILS. (CORRESPONDENCE IS REFERRED TO IN PARA 2 REFTEL. TEXTS OF LETTERS BEING POUCHED TO DEPARTMENT, LONDON AND VALLETTA.)

2. IN CONFIDENTIAL POSTSCRIPT TO AUGUST 9 LETTER, MINTOFF COMPLAINED ON LIBYAN BEHALF ABOUT THE BRITISH OPERATION OF THE MALTA FIR. COMPLAINT ALLEGED HARRASSMENT OF LIBYAN AIRCRAFT BY BRITISH AIRCRAFT BUT DID NOT RELATE TO THE RECENT MIDDLE EAST HOSTILITIES.

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PAGE 02 NATO 05386 082313Z

3. ON THREAT TO MERGE LIBYAN AND MALTESE FIR'S, PECK SAID HIS GOVERNMENT HAD NO ADDITIONAL INFORMATION ON LIBYAN OR MALTESE INTENTIONS.

4. ON ACCESS BY MALTESE TO BRITISH RUN VALLETTA FLIGHT INFORMATION CENTER (FIC), PECK SAID MALTA MIGHT HAVE SOUND COMPLAINT AND HMG WAS LOOKING INTO MATTER.

5. WITH REGARD TO MALTESE ALLEGATIONS THAT ONLY BRITIAN AMONG THE EC-9 OPPOSE FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE TO MALTA FROM THE EC, PECK SAID IT IS TRUE THAT BRITIAN IS OPPOSED BUT BRITIAN IS NOT ALONE IN OPPOSITION.

6. RE MINTOFF'S GENERAL ALLEGATION THAT MALTA IS LOSING MONEY ON BASE RENTAL SINCE POUND WAS FLOATED, BRITAIN HAS CALCULATED THAT APPROXIMATELY 10 PERCENT INCREASED DIFFERENTIAL BETWEEN THE BRITISH AND

MALTESE POUNDS RESULTED FROM THE FLOAT. APPLYING THIS PERCENTAGE TO THE UK-MALTA BALANCE OF PAYMENTS, SINCE THE FLOAT, HMG ARGUES THAT DESPITE DECREASED INTERNATIONAL PURCHASING POWER OF THE BRITISH POUNDS PAID FOR ANNUAL BASE RENTAL, THIS HAS BEEN MORE THAN OFFSET (2.3 MILLION MALTESE POUNDS TO DATE) BY THE CONSEQUENT INCREASED POUND STERLING EXPENDITURES BY BRITISH PERSONNEL AND TOURISTS TO PURCHASE MALTESE CURRENCY.

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